

FROM FIELD AND STUDY

Fossil Wombat from Fremantle.—A few days before Easter 1965, a load of building stone from Deane's (Mather Street) Quarry, South Fremantle, was delivered to a building site in Morton Street, Spearwood. When dressing this stone, the mason (Mr. P. Masilio) noticed some teeth and reported the occurrence back to the quarry workers, in particular to Messrs. F. and P. Bartolomei and Mr. J. Panizza, who in turn reported the occurrence to the Museum. The specimen (now W. Aust. Mus. 65.4.61) turned out to be of a wombat.

A good deal of work will be necessary to extract the specimen from its limestone matrix, and only then will it be possible to identify the species, but in the meantime there is no doubt that it is a wombat. The age of the "Coastal Limestones" and hence of this wombat is generally considered to be late Pleistocene.

—D. MERRILEES, W.A. Museum, Perth.

OBITUARY

C. L. E. ORTON

Mr. Charles Leonard Egremont Orton, ornithologist of Moora, died at Perth on January 26, 1965. He was born in England on March 6, 1883, and educated at Shrewsbury School. He came to Western Australia in 1904 and went to Hamersley Station in the North-West where he stayed for a few years.

Mr. Orton became active as a naturalist when he came south and joined the Midland Railway Company's staff as Ranger for land sales. The company was opening up the Midlands country rapidly and Len Orton was in charge of the big stables and camps at Moora and Three Springs, meeting the trains and taking prospective purchasers out. In ornithology his name is invariably associated with that of Mr. P. T. Sandland and the two first met on the Moora railway station at the end of October 1908 when Mr. Sandland was inquiring about a property he wished to buy in the district. Orton was the first man to be introduced to him in Moora and their mutual interests were known. As he shook hands Mr. Sandland's first words to his future colleague for over half a century were: "I believe you are a birdy man."

Orton left the company's services soon after and in January 1909 was on his own block and building a tin shack. He called the property "Petworth Park," and built it up into a very substantial estate. He was a successful farmer and had the best Southdown Stud in the State, taking numerous prizes at Royal Shows and winning several Orient Cups for crossbred lambs. He was active in civic affairs, being a member of the Moora Road Board for many years